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SUBJECT: SUB REGIONAL PROJECT - NORDIC BALTIC REGION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: ALTERNATIVE ENERGY AND ENERGY SECURITY FOR THE NORDIC-BALTIC REGION

11. Embassy Stockholm requests that ECA/PE/V/R/E design a Sub-Regional Project on alternative energy for the Nordic-Baltic region. Renewable energy and energy security are already at the top of European public and governmental agendas. With the Bali roadmap to a post-Kyoto climate change regime culminating at the COP-15 climate summit in Copenhagen in December 2009, and Sweden taking over the EU presidency in the latter half of 2009, interest in this issue in the region can only grow. While each country in the Nordic-Baltic region comes at the issue from a different angle, a program focused on alternative energy as a component of energy security and on the full spectrum of renewable energy alternatives, and how these can support specific, localized energy needs, would benefit this region.

Post encourages all Nordic-Baltic posts to identify qualified candidates. We are pleased to provide missions with a description of the subject program.

12. COMMUNICATION GOALS:

-- To examine how U.S. Government agencies, state and local governments, and private industry are finding alternative energy solutions relevant to Baltic and Nordic posts;

-- To assert the need for diversification of energy resources to promote energy security;

-- To exchange scientific and technical knowledge among participants and U.S. scientists and engineers, fostering a climate of science diplomacy by highlighting that the U.S. and Europe have common ground in energy issues.

13. PARTICIPANTS

This project is designed for local and national government agency scientists and engineers, non-governmental organization representatives, researchers, and science or environment journalists involved in climate and energy issues.

14. SUMMARY

This SRP covering alternative energy issues is designed to address the Nordics' concern for clean energy technology, while also demonstrating ways the Baltic countries can continue to strengthen energy security independent of the current need for Russian oil. Despite previous thought that these two issues should be treated apart from each other, energy security and alternative energy can no longer be treated separately. An engineering focus to the SRP will show how American companies - from Fortune 500 corporations to small businesses - implement cutting-edge technologies for developing

renewable energy.

The urgency for this SRP is grounded in policy. Climate and energy issues in the Nordics and Baltics have themselves brought science diplomacy back to the foreground, and science diplomacy is realizing a new significance that can be capitalized on right now. There are immediate needs at posts as the current administration has sought to carve out the U.S. relevancy and leadership role in the climate discussion.

Proposed program dates are February 2 to 20, 2009.

15. NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION PROGRAM

Meetings with Department of State (DOS) and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) will offer an overview of current U.S. Government policy and the factors shape current policy. A briefing at the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy will compare different ways renewable energy is generated, renewable energy investment by public and private sectors, trends in renewable energy costs, and barriers to wider use of renewable energy. The program will examine how these factors influence U.S. energy policy. The participants will also have meetings on Capitol Hill that will examine the status of energy legislation.

16. NATIONAL PROGRAM

The national itinerary will focus on public and private initiatives at the state and local levels. Participants will visit national laboratories that perform research on carbon capture and storage, as well biofuels from forest products. Participants will visit a carbon emissions trade market and green builders that incorporate energy alternatives into architectural design. State governments' programs that sell carbon offsets, identify new technologies for industry, and develop bio-economies and infrastructure development will also be explored. For each visit, participants will examine how private industry and state governments can work parallel to or in concert with larger U.S. energy policy. Participants will also meet representative of interest groups and environmental advocacy organizations, to hear their policy perspectives and their strategies to shape the policy debate. Visits to academic institutions will provide background on research being done on renewable energy in general.

17. ACTION REQUEST

Missions intending to participate in this program and wishing to nominate qualified candidates are requested to notify Stephen Taylor (TaylorSE@state.gov) at ECA/PE/V/R/E through their Public Affairs Section. Stockholm appreciates ECA support of the program and these important issues.

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